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SIPDIS

FROM USMISSION UNESCO PARIS

STATE PASS TO NPS - STEPHEN MORRIS AND PAUL HOFFMAN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SCUL](#) [PL](#) [UNESCO](#)

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH POLISH AMBASSADOR TO UNESCO REGARDING  
AUSCHWITZ NAME CHANGE

1. Guidance requested - see paragraph 6.
2. Poland's Ambassador to UNESCO, Maria Wodzynska-Walicka, met with Ambassador Oliver this morning, May 18th at the US Mission, to request USG support in Poland's efforts to formally change the name of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Concentration Camp on the World Heritage List to "Former Nazi German Concentration Camp Auschwitz-Birkenau."
3. The Polish Ambassador explained that the world press and, in particular, American and German news articles, often refer to Auschwitz as the "Polish concentration camp," a term which is extremely offensive to the Polish people. She said that the name change would help rectify the problem, ensuring that the name be consistent with historical reality. Ambassador Wodzynska-Walicka said that her initial contacts with UNESCO officials and her counterparts in Paris, including the German ambassador, have been very supportive of her request.
4. Ambassador Oliver said that requesting the name change makes sense, and that the change is justified, given the need to be accurate, honest, and faithful to the past.
5. The Polish ambassador said that her government had, in March, made a formal request to the World Heritage Committee regarding the name change. The next meetings in preparation for July's World Heritage conference in Vilnius are scheduled to take place at UNESCO headquarters in Paris on June 13.
6. US UNESCO requests that the Department provide formal guidance on this matter prior to the June 13 meeting.

OLIVER